UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
FACULTY SENATE RULES COMMITTEE

AGENDA

Friday, 15 September 2023
8:30 am
via Zoom (https://umass-amherst.zoom.us/j/94925175087?from=addon)

1. Minutes

   Michelle Trim is responsible for the minutes of this meeting. If she is unable to attend, Eric Berlin is responsible.

   Approve minutes of the 14 July 2023 meeting submitted by Neal Katz. 7 yes, 1 abstain. Minutes approved with minor edits

2. Guest: Senior Vice Provost Webley regarding equity action plans

Senior Vice Provost Webley joined the Provost's office in January – and was charged with responding to the climate survey – especially "areas of belonging"- all vice-chancellors charged with addressing disparities revealed in the climate survey

- Focus primarily on the classroom and perceptions of belonging
- Secondary concern on rates of completion
- Senior Vice Provost Webley defined 'sense of belonging' as existing at the intersection of a number of factors, including the social and cultural context, and felt the classroom is the key site for intervention.
- 26% Black students feel no sense of belonging – 42% of undergraduates response rate (https://www.umass.edu/diversity/campus-climate-2021-belonging) 10% of all undergraduates feel like they do not belong
- 4-year grad rate 80% White vs 62% Black
- Data to departments tailored based on department data from OAPA – those with small numbers for certain identity categories may not receive detailed data to avoid identifying specific students (breaking anonymity).
- Same interventions were suggested to all departments, regardless of representation or context.
- Advice was provided to Senior Vice Provost Webley regarding ways to make the data analysis more robust and the inferences drawn from that analysis more appropriate.
- Provost's office believes that none of the things they are asking for is new – that these things are all things that departments/teachers are already doing

- The goal was not to tell faculty how or what to teach – the administration wants to be perceived as very respectful of academic freedom. Questions remain.

Action taken: refer EAP plan development process/implementation to the Undergraduate Education and Graduate councils to create guidelines and potentially a campus agreement for making and implementing the equity action plans. As implementations are standardized across campus and based on campus-wide data, this initiative falls under the purview of shared governance requiring involvement of the senate.

3. Agenda items for the 12 October 2023 Faculty Senate meeting

a. Search and evaluation procedures

Actions taken: search procedures must align with the Wellman document for deans, especially in terms of composition of search committees. We hope to have a negotiated compromise after the next rules-admin meeting, and the Secretary will be meeting with the provost to discuss what might be possible.

b. Presentation of the Faculty Senate website

Senate support team will create a presentation of the new senate website and deliver it at the next senate meeting.

4. Discussion items

a. DACSS merger (deferred)

b. Canvas migration (deferred)

c. Certificate QQ proposal (deferred)

d. Leadership searches (VCs) (deferred)

e. Nominations, appointments, and the formation of additional ad hoc committees

Rules made appointments for nominations – Passed – 7 yes and 1 abstain

f. Medical excuses (deferred)

g. Scheduling presentations (Donahue Institute; Capital plan) (deferred)

h. Secretary updates (policies on medical excuses, academic honesty, required syllabus elements, enrollment regulations, co-listing) (deferred)